The University of the Third Age

MALDON
AND DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

Tour de France in Essex

July 2014

JULY 2014

Reg. Charity No. 1086182

Web Site: **www.maldonu3a.co.uk**

FROM THE CHAIR

Your Committee would like to remind members that only appropriate re-imbursement of reasonable and proper out of pocket expenses, supported by receipts when possible, for members doing U3A business can be made; as given by both our constitution and Third Age Trust rules. The U3A is a self-help organisation and it is a basic principle of the U3A that no other reward is given.

Your Committee would also like to remind members that if a U3A Travel Organiser/Co-ordinator is offered a free trip from a Tour Operator, then this should be declared to the Committee so that a decision can be made each time on whether it should be offered to the leader/organiser as a "Thank you" or shared between all the travellers as a discount.

The Tuesday lunch group have recently celebrated their 150th lunch to which Rosemary and I were invited. Quite an achievement and congratulations to the group, especially to Mike Wood who has been their co-coordinator from the beginning.
Malcom Case

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Town Mayor of Maldon's Charity Event

Friday, 12 September

A talk by the Town Mayor, Cllr Stephen Nunn

"The Battle of Maldon—Fact and Fiction"

Ring Town Hall on 01621 857373 for more information on price etc.
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Local & General History

On **Monday 28 July** we have a guided walk from Dedham to Flatford and return - for those booked we meet at 10 am in Mill Lane, Dedham main car park - postcode CO7 6DJ. Contact on the day Michael Blackwell -

We do not meet in August.

On **Monday 22 September** we have a visit to the White Cliffs & Walmer Castle. The cost of this is £36 including coffee or £30 if you are an English Heritage member.
Please contact Michael Blackwell if you wish to book a place.

Mary Burd
Co-Ordinator

Family History — Group 1

There will be no meeting in July, August and September as it has been agreed to have a break for the summer. Therefore next meeting will be **October 29th,** to be held at 58 Augustine Way, Bicknacre, CM3 4ET

Family History — Group 2

This group is designed for people starting to research their ancestors and who would like advice on how to approach the subject. Anyone interested please let me know by the end of August and then a date and time can be arranged for a meeting.
Alan Buck

Strollers

Sunday 17th August

Meet in the Cricketers Pub Car Park at Mill Green at 10.15am for 10.30am start. OS Map Chelmsford 183 Grid Reference TL 638 012; postcode CM4 0JD. The walk is 4.5 miles through the ancient woodland of Writtle Forest. There are a few steep slopes and stiles, but most of the walk is fairly easy going. Lunch will be available at the Cricketers.

WINE TASTINGS IN KENT - TUESDAY 12 AUGUST

We will depart the West Maldon Community Centre at 0830 - please leave your cars at the far end of the car park. We will pick up at Eves Corner Danbury 0845 - please let me know if you wish to be picked up there (01621 853893). We anticipate arriving back in Maldon at 1800 hours depending on traffic!

Astronomy - Stow Maries Aerodrome

The next meeting of the group is on **Monday 28th July** – Ralph Lavender to give a talk on the star sign "Leo". This talk will include the history of the sign together with the stars that can be seen in this constellation.
All U3A members are very welcome to join us.
Malcolm Case

Maritime

The next meeting will be **Monday 4th August** at The Blackwater Sailing Club at 10.oo am for an informative illustrated talk by the Essex Police Marine Unit. This unit is based in Burnham on Crouch and patrols a large area of Essex.

Strollers Too

will meet on **Tuesday 26 August** at the Green Man, Little Braxted, CM8 3LB at 10.15am for a 10.30 start for a pleasant walk through Wickham Bishops and across Benton Hall golf course, approx 4 miles.

Just Jazz

We will not be meeting during July or August.
Jim Light

Egyptology

London visit to British Museum, special tour for group members only, already booked. Any members wishing to join us for a visit to the museum or a London visit by coach on **Tuesday 9th September**, coach fare £14 return. Exact time details later.
If you are interested please contact Joyce Cotterell

NEW ARCHITECTURE GROUP

The inaugural meeting of the Architecture Group will be on **Wednesday 30th July**, commencing at 2:00pm until 3:30pm, in the upstairs conference room at Maldon Town Hall. I look forward to meeting all of you who have expressed an interest in this new group. Please come with your ideas on how you would like the group to run.

Malcolm Case

NEW GEOLOGY GROUP

The inaugural meeting of the Geology Group will be on **Wednesday 30th July,** commencing at 3:30pm until 5:00pm, in the upstairs conference room at Maldon Town Hall. I look forward to meeting all of you who have expressed an interest in this new group. Please come with your ideas on how you would like the group to run.

Malcolm Case

Theatre Group. — "The 39 Steps" — Wednesday, 24th September

Coach money for the **24th September** theatre trip to "The 39 Steps" will be £13 and a cheque needs to be paid at the August meeting.
The coach will leave West Maldon Community Centre at 10 am and leave London for return journey at 5.45.pm

Handicrafts

We have recently changed our venue and are now meeting at the Cold Norton Village Hall – a much more pleasant, light, airy (and in winter) warmer location. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month and from September will be meeting 10.00 a.m.— 12 noon.
We would be delighted to see some new faces because our numbers have been dwindling of late for a variety of reasons. We try to learn new skills in all aspects of craft – paperwork, fabric and other mediums and make it a fun morning.
Why not give it a try?

Discussion

The group has continued to meet over the last two months focusing on a wide range of topics from the recent local and European elections to the canonisation of two former popes by their living successors Francis and Benedict XV1,the 87 year old Pope Emeritus . It was reported that the previously resigned Benedict was embraced by a smiling Francis assured by the knowledge that a second miracle had taken place with the sudden recovery of a Costa Rican woman with an inoperable brain aneuryism. It goes without saying that no medical or doctors' reports were mentioned, which caused some tongue-in-cheeks among our small group, with the belief that perhaps all our doubts keep alive the possibility of miracles. However, when confronted with the question as to why the Catholic Church still continues to make saints, a process regarded by some as arcane, if not medieval, the reply was that they were heroes and role models for the rest of us mere mortals as we try to live a holy life. These reported words brought some frowns to our members` faces bearing in mind the recent scandals of child abuse, misappropriation of Vatican funds and other wrong-doings by certain holy members who perhaps should be seated in the other side of the confession box.
The second miracle of the afternoon was the sight of UKIP`s very own saint in the form of Nigel Farage, again smiling from ear to ear complete with a pint glass of beer and cigarette, proclaiming the virtues of leaving the European Union and standing on our own feet like the old days. Like it or not, we are living in the modern trading world of today with movement of peoples between countries for one reason or another and no amount of media hype about immigration is going to change that, in spite of performing the second miracle for Mr. Farage .
The mention of `Immigration` immediately focused attention on our most labour-intensive industry of all, namely "The NHS", and one can only guess how it would survive without foreigners. The NHS however is always a fair target for criticism and the latest bold headlines reading "Weight Watchers on The NHS" was no exception for our small group. Suggestions that the state should pay for overweight patients to attend slimming clubs to tackle obesity on the assumption that the cost would be outweighed by potential savings in treatment produced some grimacing!
Finally by way of a light change of subject, shopping habits were discussed in this technological age of ours and it did seem unanimous that the trolley battle in the supermarkets together with its social aspect far outweighed the tapping on a keyboard and ordering on line. As one lady added there was always the chance that a tall handsome knight in shining armour would reach up for that can of beans on the top shelf and deliver it to her trolley. A Tesco romance then cannot be ruled out!
A pleasant afternoon had by all and please note that there will be no meeting in August.
Ray Harman

2014 CALENDAR—Dates for your Diary

List of Events and Outings during the year.

Mon 28 July	Guided walk from Dedham to Flatford - Local History
Tues. 12 Aug	Wine Tasting in Kent—Wine Group 3
Wed. 20 Aug	Thames North Bank Walk, - London Walks
Tues. 9 Sept	Visit to British Museum - Egyptology
9/10 Sept	U3A AGM and Conference, Cirencester.
Mon 22 Sept	The White Cliffs and Walmer Castle - Local History
Wed. 24 Sept	Theatre - 'The 39 Steps'
Thurs. 25 Sept	Barn Dance at Mundon V.H.
Thurs. 2 Oct	Watts Gallery, Guildford
Fri. 17 Oct.	Beetle Drive - Social
Wed. 15 Oct	Searching Alleyways of the City of London - London Walks
Tues. 28 Oct.	Study Day, Plume School, Maldon
Mon. 3 Nov	Visit to Trinity House - Maritime
Thurs. 20 Nov	Call My Wine Bluff - Social
Wed. 26 Nov.	"White Christmas" - Theatre visit
Fri. 12 Dec	"The Sixteen at Christmas" - Theatre visit
2015	
27/29 April	Flanders - Lest We Forget.

Further details of the above events available from your Co-ordinator or in the Newsletter.

Barn Dancing

The Scottish Country Dancing Group has decided to hold a morning of Barn Dancing on **Thursday, 25th September** from 10 am to 12 noon. This will be held in Mundon Village Hall at the cost of £3 including refreshments. The group will be led by Sue Last who calls for Barn Dancing events throughout the South of England.

Do come and enjoy the morning.

Proposed Visit to the Watts Gallery, Compton near Guildford

Thursday 2nd October

George F Watts, OM RA 1874-1904, was an eminent Victorian painter and sculptor, very highly regarded by his colleagues and the general public.

This purpose built gallery is more like an artists' village since his wife Mary's major work, The Watts Chapel, is an important part of the tour. This Chapel is a unique fusion of Art Nouveau, Celtic, Romanesque and Egyptian influences. Mary encouraged the local community to join in creating this spectacular building.

The third part of the visit will be to Linnerslease, the Autumn/Winter home of the couple. The whole setting is in beautiful gardens and woodland. There is a restaurant for visitors.

The proposal is to make a full day's outing –cost £19 which includes Guides to all three buildings. If we plan to eat at the restaurant we can pre-book our lunch, which will fit in with our tours.

Transport cost will depend on the number of people in the group. I would appreciate early contact –Sheila Epps 01621 850467 – if you would like to join this outing.

Do look on line www.wattsgallery.org.uk This is very comprehensive and will surely whet your appetite.

Sheila Epps

Strollers Too

For our June Stroll seven of us met at The Whalebone, Fingringhoe. It was a lovely sunny day and we walked for just over four miles. There were views of the Colne River and Wivenhoe from the old water mill. We walked through fields of corn and rape waiting to be harvested and saw the conveyor belt moving gravel from the local gravel pits. We walked along the edge of the Essex Wildlife Reserve and also saw that the red flags were flying for the army firing ranges. We finished with lunch at The Whalebone before journeying home!

Feedback about the Main Meetings at Wickham Bishops

Thank you to the attendees of the March and May meetings who completed a form to give the Committee some useful feedback and ideas. Sixty-two forms were completed (some representing more than one person's views) and feedback in general was extremely positive. About a third of the responses said simply that everything was fine with no additional comment.

The main aspects mentioned on other responses were about Speakers, the venue and the organisation and format of meetings. Speakers were deemed to be good or better for the most part and the four responses mentioning the venue all indicated their appreciation of it, although two of them wished that there was a similar hall available in Maldon. Some very useful ideas and suggestions were offered on a few responses about the order and format of the meeting and these will be carefully considered by the Committee.
Once again, many thanks to those who responded, it is appreciated very much.
Marrie Webster

Study Day

All Day groups of Water Colour, Acrylics, Digital Photography, and English Patchwork are now full as is the morning session of Family History. Whole day Art subjects full, but spaces probably on half day ones, which are Pen & Wash, and Canal Boat Art.

Essex Annual Quiz

On Tuesday June 24th ten teams of eight people from U3As across Essex met in Chelmsford for the Annual Quiz.

Basildon and Billericay were once again the winners, followed closely by Thorpe Bay, Heybridge, and we were fourth.

Our congratulations to Basildon and Billericay for their fourth straight win, and for organising refreshments so efficiently before the Quiz began. Our special thanks to Rosemary and Malcolm for their hard work in preparing the questions, finding the answers, and conducting the afternoon so efficiently on their computer.
Last but not least, thank you to our own participating team for their valiant effort, and to Dave for his support.
Sylvia Cousins

U3A: Gardeners Go South 1st. - 4th. July

When fifty members of Maldon U3A with friends from neighbouring groups enjoy a four day tour of gardens in the south of England, you can guarantee that there will be fifty versions of events. I was asked to record my impressions so you can expect forty-nine contradictory responses in next month's newsletter.

The Wessex Hotel in Bournemouth was an excellent base for our ventures but on our way there we broke our journey twice.

First at "The Wakes" in Selbourne where the Oxford educated, comfortably moneyed but generous Rev. Gilbert White (1720-93) administered kindly to his parishioners distributing vegetables from his garden and providing other practical help. But his lifelong passion was the meticulous observation and recording of the weather and natural world around him. Like Darwin a hundred years later, Gilbert White used his 30 acre garden as a source for his researches. His "The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne" was a seminal work still in publication today. The 30 acre garden is mostly fields and woodlands but there are beds of vegetables, herbs and wildflowers.

The "Wakes" is an appropriate place to house the "Oats Collection" - the Lawrence Oats of Scott's tragic Antarctic expedition - since the display lays emphasis on the value of the expedition's similarly meticulous recordings of weather and the natural world that the expedition experienced.

Our second stop was at Jane Austen's House in Chawston where she wrote most of her mature works during the last eight years of her life. Because of the conventions of the times, her novels were published anonymously and by the time of her death in 1817 had earned a mere £618. The Austens were the poor relations of a larger family but they where much loved and contented. The museum and the traditional cottage garden encapsulate the spirit of the family.

The Watercress Line from Alton took us by steam train to Arlesford where, by Jan's foresight, Joyce and Frank Stokes were on the platform to greet us. Their move to be near their son was the right one but they very much miss friends from Maldon. Their local U3A has 1400 members scattered over a wide rural area so it is difficult to maintain contacts without a car. Nevertheless, Frank has set up a family history group.

Next day we crossed the Solent and Tim, our driver, gave us a tour of the Isle of Wight, which he obviously knows well, before bringing us to Osborne House. Having previously been to Balmoral which is quite modest and light in decoration, I was surprised by the size and heavy opulence of Victoria and Albert's other "bolt hole". Nevertheless, Rosemary and I were so interested that we were overlong in the house and left no time to see the Swiss Chalet, the beach or walled garden. We did however find time to enjoy an ice cream in the formal garden...

Day three and we took a short journey in the morning to Compton Acres on a well tree-ed and undulating site with delights round every corner of its winding paths, notably the Japanese garden and the Italian garden which, in blazing sun, provided the setting for the traditional group photo.

I know of no-one in our party who had heard of Breamore House and Museum so it was a special delight to find a hidden gem. The Doddingtons received 30,000 acres from Henry VIII on the dissolution of the monasteries and completed the traditional E-formed Elizabethan house in 1583. Dissolute descendants had to sell the house which was bought by Sir Edward Hulse in the early 18th Century. He was Physician in Ordinary at the Courts of Queen Anne and Georges I and II. His descendants still live there today but their estate has been reduced to a paltry 4,500 acres. Family histories can be a 'turn off' but here it was fascinating as were the pictures and furniture. A 'must see' if you are in the area.

There is a museum of agricultural trades, and machinery within the grounds which we all enjoyed.

On the journey home we stopped for four hours at Sir Harold Hillier's gardens near Romsey. As one member remarked, this is somewhat like Kew Gardens - an arboretum interspersed with shrubs and flowers most of which are named. Despite a large number of visitors it was easy to explore peacefully (and to get lost) over the 180 acres.

Our final visit was to Whitchurch Silk Mill on the fast flowing River Test. The mill dates from about 1800 and is one of only a few working silk mills in this country. It was fascinating to follow the transfer of power from the water wheel via a sophisticated series of gears, rods and drive belts to the spinning and weaving machines. There is romance in this mechanism which is sadly missing in this age of electronics. In its heyday 108 people were employed there. Today there is only one lady who has mastered every phase of the extremely complex processes. She is assisted by apprentices who are entrusted with various sections of the work. I am still pondering how someone could thread between 60 and 600 silk threads per inch though a steel comb.

Others of the party may dispute my account but all will agree that we owe a big 'thank you' to Jan Robertson who organised this tour, with her usual attention to every detail, and to Mary Reeve, who looked after us throughout the tour

Harry Bacon

FOR SALE

Boxed Petanque Set in very good condition
Only £10
Contact Mr Wood

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Corby Trouser Press— free to a good home!
Contact Jim Light

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Heybridge U3A have booked a trip to the Historic Dockyard Chatham for Saturday 20th September and have some vacant seats if any of your members are interested.

This is the weekend of the annual '1940s Nostalgia Event', advertised as 'like travelling back in time with 1940s cars, aeroplanes, fashion, music and street scenes', though the more general Docklands exhibitions will also be open to us.
Fords coach will collect us from the bus-stop at Tesco Extra on the Fullbridge at 8.30am, and leave the Dockyards at 4pm.
Cost £24.50pp. Last date for payment 8th August.

Enquiries to me please
Pat Smith

18th August Meeting
Wickham Bishops Village Hall at 1.30 pm

Speaker
Tom Corby
"Behind the Scenes at Buckingham Palace"

Theatre Visit

Irving Berlin's

"White Christmas"

The Musical

Wednesday 26th November 2014

Matinee performance

Price £36.25

Starring

Aled Jones & Tom Chambers

at the Dominion Theatre, London.

We have reserved 30 tickets for the above show on **Wednesday 26th November 2014,** matinee performance. If we sell the 30 seats then we will travel by coach (fare approx. £15.00) if not then travel will be by train. If you would like to come please let me know asap and send me a cheque payable to "Maldon & District U3A" for the theatre tickets.

Rosemary Case

LUNCHEON CLUB VENUES -

Times 12.15 pm

TUESDAY **5th August at the Mitre in Wickham Bishops**
Co-ordinator: Mike Wood

WEDNESDAY To be notified
Co-ordinator: Paul Costa

Note: If you sign up for the lunches and then find you are unable to attend for any reason, can you please notify the Co-ordinator as soon as possible,

BLACKWATER U3A	HEYBRIDGE U3A
Contact	Contact
01621 854 065	01621 841066
Dawn Mundy, Chairman	Joyce Woodham, Chairman

THE LIMEBROOK U3A
Contact
01621 855 883
Paul Madge, Chairman

Your Committee

Chairman	Malcolm Case
Vice Chairman	Marrie Webster
Secretary	Kym Marshall
Treasurer	Martin Cook
Membership Sec.	Alan Clarke
Newsletter Editor	Jan Robertson
Committee	Fred Lane
	Andrew Simmonds
	Judith Johnston
	Sylvia Beckett
	Veronica Smith

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Deadline for next newsletter: Friday, 8th August

CO-ORDINATORS

Antiques	Liz Wood
Astronomy	Malcolm Case
Bird Watching	Pat Clements Peter Gaywood
Botany	Veronica Smith
Bridge	Sheila Epps
Bridge for the Curious	Joyce Yates Gill Stone
Canasta	Carol Craven Elaine Bane
Computers	Jan Robertson
Discussion	Ray Harman
Egyptology	Joyce Cotterell
Elizabethan Age	Beryl McDonell
Family History	Alan Buck
French Conversation	Ray Harman
Gardeners	Jan Robertson
German	Jenny Plumb
Handicraft	Marian Manning
Just Jazz	Jim Light Peter Beckett
Local History	Mary Burd Michael Blackwell
London Walks & Talks	Christine Speed Janeen Trew
Luncheon Group 1st Tues 3rd Wed. Eat & Meet 2nd Wed	Mike Wood Paul Costa Joyce Cotterell
Mah-Jong	Molly Polden
Maritime	Malcolm Case
Music Appreciation	Enid Hall John Skuse
New Friends	Liz Robson
Petanque (Boule)	Jack Veash
Photography	Michael Manning
Poetry	Jo Robson
Reading	Sheila Epps
Rummikub 1 Rummikub 2	Colin Beckett Beryl McDonell
Scottish Country Dancing	Shirley Grummett
Sing for Pleasure	Sylvia Carpenter
Smartphone	Barry Samuels
Snooker	John Williams
Strollers	Gill Stone
Table Tennis	Gordon Hardy
Ten Pin Bowling	David Arnold
Theatre Outings	Rosemary Case Joyce Cotterell
Trees	Veronica Smith
Weekenders	Beryl McDonell
Whist	Molly Polden
Wine Circle No. 1/2 Wine Circle No. 3 Wine Circle No. 4	Graham Boswell Mary Burd Paul Costa Alan Clarke
Writing for Fun	Patrick Forsyth

If you are still having trouble receiving your monthly Newsletter,
please contact Alan Clarke, our Membership Secretary on 01621 828093

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4 Maritime	5 Table Tennis Snooker	6 Ten Pin Bowling Bridge for the Curious Bridge	7 Rummikub 2	8	9	10
11	12 Table Tennis Snooker Wine Tasting in Kent	13 Ten Pin Bowling Luncheon Club	14	15	16	17 Strollers
18 **Meeting 1.30 pm**	19 Table Tennis Snooker	20 Ten Pin Bowling Ldn Walk—Thames Nth Bank	21 Antiques	22	23	24
25	26 Table Tennis Snooker Strollers Too	27 Ten Pin Bowling Writing for Fun	28 Scottish Country Dancing	29	30	31

I try my utmost to get the calendar correct each month, but I would advise you to always check with your co-ordinator as to the date of your next meeting.

Newsletter Editor: Mrs. Jan. Robertson,

Many groups are not meeting in August, so if in doubt please contact your co-ordinator